

Application No.: 10/618,109
Amendment Dated: August 9, 2007
Reply to Office Action of: April 3, 2007

13488HF (GLT-106US)

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1, 3-7 and 11 were pending at the time of the Office Action. With this response, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the nonheatsealable layer comprises natural fibers, and that the heatsealable layer also comprises natural fibers as well as synthetic fibers comprising a blend of a synthetic material and an adhesion promoter. Support for the amendments may be found in the application at paragraphs [0044], [0037], and [0039]. New claim 15 is added herewith, further limiting claim 1 to recite "consisting of." No new matter has been added.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3-7 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0019598 A1 ("Nakagawa") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,228,948 ("Flaris"). Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection has been overcome in view of the amendments made to claim 1, for the reasons that follow.

Claim 1 now recites a heatsealable layer that includes natural fibers, and neither Nakagawa nor Flaris teaches such a feature. Nakagawa teaches a heatsealable layer that always include a synthetic pulp that comprises polyethylene and an ethylene- α,β -unsaturated carboxylic acid copolymer. (See abstract) Nakagawa's heatsealable layer also includes a synthetic short fiber that may be made from polyolefin, polyester, polyamide, and "conjugates" thereof. (see abstract, [0038], and [0075]) However, despite the fact that Nakagawa always uses natural fiber in his nonheatsealable layer (B), he does not disclose using such a material as a component of his heatsealable layer (A). In fact, when describing the heatseal layer (A), he recites blends of the synthetic pulp and the synthetic short fiber that add up to 100% of that layer. For example, he states that "It is preferable that the blending ratio is 1 to 99% by weight, and preferably 50 to 99% by weight, and more preferably 50 to 90% by weight, of the polyolefin synthetic pulp and 1 to 99% by weight, preferably 1 to 50% by weight, and more preferably 10 to 50% by weight of the synthetic fiber, so that the total quantity of the two becomes 100% by weight. A blending ratio falling in said ranges is advantageous in that the heat-seal layer exhibits high heat-sealability and hot tack over a wide heat-sealing temperature range extending from low temperatures to high temperatures, and thus the bond to the substrate layer is made

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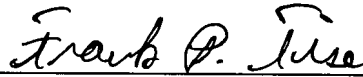
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stronger." (See paragraph [0076]) Thus Nakahara does not teach or suggest the inclusion of natural fibers in his heatsealable layer. Flaris does not remedy this deficiency, since his invention relates to methods of making maleic-modified resins and he does not discuss combining the resins with natural fibers, or making filter papers. Thus the combination of Nakahara and Flaris does not provide all of the elements of claim 1, and thus does not support a *prima facie* case of obviousness over claim 1 and its dependents. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims 1, 3-7, 11 and 15 are in condition for immediate allowance and a notice to this effect is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative, Frank Tise, if it appears that this may facilitate examination.

Respectfully submitted,



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Gayle D. Bay